

SOUTH LEWIS COUNTY SUBAREA PLAN

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SCOPING REPORT – May 4, 2010

Introduction

In 2009, the County initiated a planning process to engage the cities of Toledo, Winlock, and Vader and South County citizens in drafting a plan that is intended to be adopted into the Lewis County Comprehensive Plan. An Advisory Committee was formed and a Phase One Draft Plan was prepared and released for public review. The County and Committee are now working to complete the draft and incorporate the environmental impact review for public review and comment in June, 2010. This will lead to a County Planning Commission public hearing and a recommended subarea plan and final EIS for Board of County Commissioners' consideration and action in October, 2010.

Lewis County has determined this (Subarea Plan) proposal is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c) and will be prepared. Materials indicating likely environmental impacts may be reviewed at the Community Development offices and on the South Lewis County Subarea Plan website. The "Determination of Significance" (DS) was issued April 1, 2010. A SEPA checklist was not prepared – instead the County used analysis documented in the subarea plan process to make the determination. A public scoping meeting was held on May 14, 2010 at St Mary's Center near Toledo, Washington. The meeting notes and other comments are available from the County Department of Community Development. The scoping period ended April 30, 2010, however, the planning process is intended to be flexible enough to accommodate further determination of the EIS scope.

In this case, the County will utilize the analyses, findings, and conclusions developed during the preparation of the subarea plan as the basis for the DEIS, except where more recent information is readily available. Overall, the level of detail in the DEIS will not be at the site-, or project-specific scale. Since adoption of the subarea plan is expected to involve goals and policies intended to address the anticipated impacts of urban development, the draft plan and EIS will be considered together as companion documents that identify mitigation measures such as development standards, design guidelines, and infrastructure improvements to be implemented following adoption of the plan. Most specific environmental impact assessment and necessary mitigation will then be addressed at the project permitting level. This is phased review under SEPA. *"Phased review" means the coverage of general matters in broader environmental documents, with subsequent narrower documents concentrating solely on the issues specific to the later analysis (WAC [197-11-060\(5\)](#))). Phased review may be used for a single proposal or EIS (WAC [197-11-060](#)).*

Alternatives

As noted in WAC 197-11-442, the primary purpose of a nonproject EIS is to compare the relative impacts of the alternatives that have been suggested. This includes the "no-action"

alternative under current zoning; possible changes to the existing urban growth areas; and possible addition of future “non-municipal” urban growth areas.

Conclusion

The essential purpose of the EIS is to identify “significant adverse” environmental impacts of growth. Growth will continue to occur in South Lewis County in all of the alternatives. The difference is in the nature and extent of growth; whether there are identifiable thresholds where either the amount or concentration of growth will create significant adverse impacts; whether those impacts can be mitigated; and if not, whether the cumulative unmitigated impacts would undermine the validity of the plan.

As of the close of the scoping period the County received comments summarized below:

- What are the criteria or guiding policies to allow the cities and the Tribe to assess a proposal to make investment decisions with private enterprise? – This is a valid issue to be addressed in the plan. The EIS may consider possible mitigation strategies for addressing impacts on government financing, although SEPA does not require economic impact analysis.
- If there is an increase in gross acreage that is reflected in buildable land you don’t want to miss the connection to transportation – The EIS will utilize the South County Transportation Plan analysis to identify impacts and address mitigations associated with land use and transportation.
- The plan is intended to link future housing demand and employment. The EIS will include analysis of current adopted plans and proposed alternatives associated with residential capacity impacts, to the extent any are revealed.
- We need to insure that we have clear language that clarifies what type of development that could come under the following designations identified on the last maps dated April 2010 Land Use Options. – The plan will identify land use and zoning designations. Impacts of these will be included in the DEIS land use analysis.
- I have serious concerns regarding transportation as it relates to the recent study for improvements of the I-5 interchange at exit 63. It appears there will be significant wetland impacts to the north bound on and off ramps and the south bound on ramp. There could also be significant impacts related to the relocation of Camus Road. The DEIS will address mitigation strategies and regulations necessary to address these impacts.
- Because of the distances the sewer and water lines will have to be ran, it is almost certain the proposed utility will run into areas that will require some type of mitigation. The draft plan and DEIS will address these impacts to the extent that are defined in the on-going regional utility planning process.
- It is imperative that there is language in the EIS that specifically identifies a method to mitigate these areas or more specifically to establish a process for purchasing development credits or a set aside in perpetuity, such as the City of Ocean Shores/Ecology proposal now under consideration..

[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/wetlands/mitigation/banking/public-
notices.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/wetlands/mitigation/banking/public-
notices.html) It should also be noted that there was extensive discussion in reports put
forward in March of 2009 by the WSDOE and WSDFW for Lewis County as guidance on
possible ways to resolve these matters moving forward with the sub area plan. – The
state agency reports have been included in the subarea plan and will be used to identify
mitigating measures that can be adopted.

DEIS Scope

The DEIS will address the environmental elements shown below, but will not include all of the
“sub-elements” since detailed information on some of them is not available.

- (1) *Natural environment*
 - (a) *Earth*
 - (c) *Water*
 - (d) *Plants and animals*
 - (e) *Energy and natural resources*
- (2) *Built environment*
 - (a) *Environmental health*
 - (b) *Land and shoreline use*
 - (c) *Transportation*
 - (d) *Public services and utilities*